

November 1, 2006

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF
THE TORRANCE PLANNING COMMISSION**

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Torrance Planning Commission convened in a regular session at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, November 1, 2006, in City Council Chambers at Torrance City Hall.

2. SALUTE TO THE FLAG

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner Horwich.

3. ROLL CALL

Present: Commissioners Browning, Busch, Horwich and Chairperson Faulk.

Absent: Commissioners Gibson and Uchima.

Also Present: Planning Manager Lodan, Sr. Planning Assistant Hurd,
Plans Examiner Noh, Associate Civil Engineer Symons,
Fire Marshal Kazandjian and Deputy City Attorney Whitham.

MOTION: Commissioner Browning, seconded by Commissioner Busch, moved to grant Commissioner Gibson and Commissioner Uchima excused absences from this meeting; voice vote reflected unanimous approval.

4. REPORT ON POSTING OF THE AGENDA

Planning Manager Lodan confirmed that the agenda was posted on the Public Notice Board at 3031 Torrance Boulevard on 10/26/06.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION: Commissioner Browning moved for the approval of the October 4, 2006 Planning Commission minutes as submitted. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Horwich and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioners Gibson and Uchima).

6. REQUESTS FOR POSTPONEMENT

Planning Manager Lodan relayed the applicant's request to continue Agenda Item 10A (CUP06-00018: Fancher Development) to November 15, 2006.

MOTION: Commissioner Browning moved to continue Agenda Item 10A to November 15, 2006. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Horwich and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioners Gibson and Uchima).

Planning Manager Lodan announced that the hearing would not be re-advertised as it was continued to a date certain.

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Chairperson Faulk reviewed the policies and procedures of the Planning Commission, including the right to appeal decisions to the City Council.

7. TIME EXTENSIONS

7A. MIS06-00278 (CUP05-00025): SAMUEL KIM

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a Time Extension of a previously approved Conditional Use Permit (CUP05-00025) for condominium purposes on property located in the R-2 Zone at 25217 Ward Street.

Recommendation

Approval.

Planning Assistant Hurd introduced the request.

Samuel Kim, representing the applicant, voiced his agreement with the recommended conditions of approval. He explained that the Time Extension was necessary because the property owner has been unable to complete the project due to health problems and financial difficulties.

MOTION: Commissioner Horwich moved for the approval of MIS06-00278, as conditioned, including all findings of fact set forth by staff. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Busch and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioners Gibson and Uchima).

Planning Assistant Hurd read aloud the number and title of Planning Commission Resolution No. 06-124.

MOTION: Commissioner Busch moved for the adoption of Planning Commission Resolution No. 06-124. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Browning and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioners Gibson and Uchima).

8. CONTINUED HEARINGS – None.

9. WAIVERS

9A. WAV06-00018: D. RALEIGH HARRIS

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a Waiver to allow a reduction in the rear yard setback requirement in conjunction with a one-story addition to an existing one-story, single-family residence on property located in the Hillside Overlay District in the R-1 Zone at 429 Via Los Miradores.

Recommendation

Denial without prejudice.

Planning Assistant Hurd introduced the request.

Raleigh Harris, 429 Via Los Miradores, explained that he would like to update and enlarge his 50 year-old house by expanding into the rear yard setback, which is not used for anything because it cannot be accessed from inside the home, and that he does not want to add a second-story due to the expense involved. He noted that the project would not interfere with the view, light, air or privacy of neighbors and the only four neighbors who are able to see the addition have signed letters of support.

George Lewison, 428 Via Los Miradores, stated that he built a similar addition some time ago and it has not created any problems and he saw no reason why anyone would object to it.

Voicing support for the project, Commissioner Browning reported that he was initially concerned about the loss of the backyard until he visited the subject property and saw that there is a courtyard area, which is more than adequate for outdoor activities. He related his observation that the addition would have no impact on neighbors.

Commissioner Horwich also voiced support for the project. He stated that he felt the hardship criteria for granting a Waiver was met because the only other way to add space, is to build a second story and this would be a financial hardship for the applicant. He noted that the only possible impact on property values would be to the subject property and the substandard setback would have to be fully disclosed to any potential buyer.

Commissioner Busch noted his agreement with his colleagues' remarks.

MOTION: Commissioner Busch moved for the approval of WAV06-00018, as conditioned, including all findings of fact set forth by staff. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Browning and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioners Gibson and Uchima).

Planning Manager Lodan noted that a resolution reflecting the Commission's action would be brought back for approval at the next meeting.

10. FORMAL HEARINGS

10A. CUP06-00018: FRANCHER DEVELOPMENT (NINA RAEY)

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a Conditional Use Permit to allow the operation of an indoor commercial recreation center/ health club in conjunction with interior tenant improvements and minor exterior changes to an existing commercial building on property located in the Hawthorne Boulevard Corridor Specific Plan North Torrance Sub-District at 4240 Redondo Beach Boulevard, Suite A.

Continued to November 15, 2006.

10B. MOD06-00007: 7-ELEVEN INC. (LISA CAMPOS)

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a Modification of a previously approved Precise Plan of Development (PRE96-00024) to allow the conversion of an existing Walgreen's Express building to a 7-Eleven convenience store on property located in the C2-PP Zone at 2205 Sepulveda Boulevard.

Recommendation

Approval.

Planning Assistant Hurd introduced the request and noted supplemental material available at the meeting.

Ronald Taylor, representing 7-Eleven Inc., voiced his agreement with the recommended conditions of approval.

In response to Commissioner Busch's inquiry, Mr. Taylor confirmed that all 7-Eleven stores in Torrance are open 24 hours a day and indicated that he had no objection to providing one additional handicapped parking space.

Commissioner Browning expressed concerns about the potential impact of the 24-hour operation on the adjacent apartment building and questioned whether tenants were notified of this hearing.

Planning Manager Lodan advised that notification of the hearing was sent to all property owners within the notification area and a sign was posted on the site, which tenants of the apartment could see in the event the owner didn't relay the information. He noted that Condition No. 9 requires that an exterior lighting plan be submitted, which staff will review to ensure that lighting does not impact nearby residences.

Mr. Taylor reported that the applicant intends to install additional landscaping along the northern property line to act as a buffer for the apartment building.

MOTION: Commissioner Horwich moved to close the public hearing. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Busch and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioners Gibson and Uchima).

Commissioner Busch voiced support for the project, citing the City's positive experience with 7-Elevens at other locations in Torrance and the fact that Mr. Taylor has acknowledged the need to provide additional landscaping as a buffer for the apartments.

Planning Manager Lodan noted that the applicant will be required to submit a landscape plan (Condition No. 7), which staff will review to ensure that adequate buffering is provided.

MOTION: Commissioner Busch moved for the approval of MOD06-00007, as conditioned, including all findings of fact set forth by staff, with the following modification:

Add

- That one additional handicapped parking space shall be provided to the satisfaction of the Community Development Director.

The motion was seconded by Commissioner Browning and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioners Gibson and Uchima).

Planning Assistant Hurd read aloud the number and title of Planning Commission resolution No. 06-119.

MOTION: Commissioner Busch moved for the adoption of Planning Commission Resolution No. 06-119. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Browning and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioners Gibson and Uchima).

11. **RESOLUTIONS** – None.

12. **PUBLIC WORKSHOP ITEMS** – None.

13. **MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS** – None.

14. **REVIEW OF CITY COUNCIL ACTION ON PLANNING MATTERS** – None.

15. **LIST OF TENTATIVE PLANNING COMMISSION CASES**

Planning Manager Lodan reviewed the agenda for the Planning Commission meeting of November 15, 2006.

16. **ORAL COMMUNICATIONS**

16A. Judy Brunetti, 4815 Greenmeadows, asked that the Commission consider amending the Torrance Municipal Code to make all rooftop decks subject to the same approval process that is currently in effect for the Hillside Overlay area. She explained that rooftop decks in the Hillside area must be approved by the Planning Commission, but there are no restrictions on rooftop decks in the rest of the city as long as they meeting Building Code requirements.

Submitting photographs to illustrate, Ms. Brunetti reported that her neighbor is finishing construction on a second-story addition, topped by large rooftop deck, which will greatly intrude on her privacy, and while she realizes it's too late to do anything about this project, she would like to spare others from the same fate. She noted that in addition to the impact on privacy, rooftop decks can be extremely noisy and create safety hazards and these problems are not limited to the Hillside area.

A brief discussion ensued, and it was the consensus of the Commission to formally discuss this issue at a future meeting.

MOTION: Commissioner Busch moved to direct staff to bring forward a discussion item on rooftop decks. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Browning and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioners Gibson and Uchima).

Planning Manager Lodan advised that this item would be on the November 15 agenda.

16B. Commissioner Browning requested an update on construction projects at 3121 and 3203 Carolwood Lane that were started without benefit of a permit.

16C. Commissioner Browning thanked Planning staff and Deputy City Attorney Whitham for meeting with him and providing him with information.

17. ADJOURNMENT

At 7:50 p.m., the meeting was adjourned to Wednesday, November 15, 2006 at 7:00 p.m.

Approved as Submitted December 20, 2006 s/ Sue Herbers, City Clerk
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